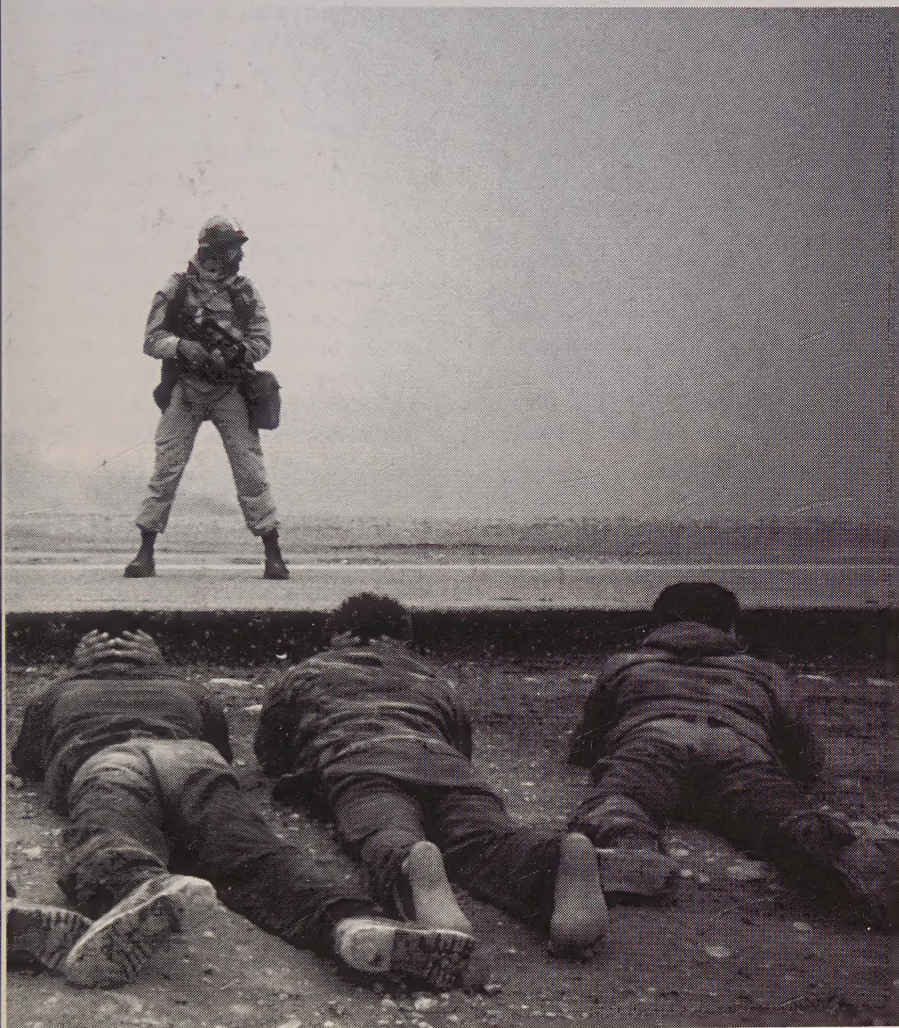


franciscan

SOCIETY OF SAINT FRANCIS

Vol. 5 No. 2 May, 1993

LEVEL
ONE



PROCESSED

JUL 27 1993

GTII LIBRARY

PEACEMAKING

Peace is as desperately needed now as in Francis' day. In this issue Michael Hare-Duke looks at 'The Problems of Peace' in a changing world; Terry Tastard writes on 'Peace and violence', showing how Francis follows Jesus in seeing no one as the enemy; and Greta Brooks takes us on a personal journey of 'Practising peace' through her life as Quaker and local peace-maker.

The problems of peace

by Michael Hare Duke

Over the course of the twentieth century the attitudes of Christian leaders to war have undergone a revolutionary change. In the 1914-18 war there was a confident triumphalism, a certainty that God was fighting on Britain's side epitomised in the slogan 'The Kaiser or Christ'. Such a view would be almost untenable in the mainstream churches today.



In the lead up to the Gulf War and the subsequent treatment of Iraq, Pope John Paul has been a consistent voice condemning violence. The American National Council of Churches and in particular the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, Edmund Browning, put all their energy on the side of negotiation

rather than military action.

Armed conflict has become unacceptable for two reasons. First, because all war is now total war waged against civilians and, if nuclear weapons were ever used, would involve indiscriminate ecological damage as well. The American Roman Catholic hierarchy led the way in a most significant

Contents

Minister's Letter	3
Resources for youth	3
Peace and violence	4
The boys with no birthdays	5
Practising peace	6
All roads lead to . . .	7
Justice and Peace Links	8
Changing hearts	9
Poem	9
The Cambridge Friary	10
Community Routes	11
Book Reviews	14
Peace and justice	16

statement in the mid-1980s condemning not only the use but the possession of nuclear weapons. Second, a greater sophistication in understanding history precludes the possibility of labelling one side as good and the other bad. We are far too aware of mixed motives. Consequently a careful application of the just war theory can now only lead to one conclusion that international armed conflict is never in that sense 'just'.

Two problems

If a theoretical consensus is beginning to emerge that war ought no longer to be a policy, two practical problems remain. First, how does the international community respond to aggressors? Second, how can we overcome the uncriticised belief that violence is the last resource in solving disputes? Without the sanction of war nations will feel naked when conflict mounts. Theory seems divorced from practical reality and a gulf has opened between church and state.

It has always been assumed that a national church would in the last resort bless the military and their arms. It was left to the small sects, the 'peace churches' to take an absolute position against killing. As war becomes more and more self-defeating, there is the question of whether some form of pacificism is the only realistic policy. That conclusion however would demand a revolution in current political thinking. There is a network of popular assumptions which still go unchallenged: aggressors must always be defeated; the appeasement of Munich must never be repeated; national interests must always be defended; a nation's significance is in proportion to its military muscle.

Popular opinion

Such attitudes underlay the British response to the Falklands War. When it began it was not possible for any question to be raised about the wisdom of despatching the task force. Only much later did the repressed doubts surface. Again, popular opinion still will not allow Britain to consider resignation from the nuclear club into which the Labour government of Clement Attlee took us because it was symbolic of our status as a great power.

The clinching argument for military opposition to Saddam Hussein was the contrast with Neville Chamberlain's discredited line of 'appeasement'. In the political culture that we have inherited, those who prosecute a war effectively improve their electoral prospects. Yet it would be equally possible to see war as failure. In that case leaders who were so diplomatically inept that they embroiled their country in armed conflict would be at risk. The blood-stained conqueror would not be acclaimed as a hero but become an object of condemnation.

The prevailing assumptions developed their own value system and supporting mythology in a context where survival has depended on bravery in the face of known enemies and an unfriendly environment. It has been necessary to be wary of strangers and to emphasise the predatory aspects of the animal world. In contrast now, survival depends on a changed gestalt. Humanity is no longer the endangered species but the source of threat both to itself and to the rest of life. We need now to learn the art not of hunting but of conservation, of collaboration and not exclusive defence.

To achieve this we need to tell stories which reinforce such attitudes. This begins with the teaching of Christ and his death/resurrection truth. In the past individuals have lived by this story but it has been too difficult for nations to accept corporately. Now, by contrast the five hundredth anniversary of Columbus' voyage was not celebrated in 1992 as an unequivocal triumph. 1993 has been designated by the United Nations to be the Year of the Indigenous Peoples, inviting colonial powers to reflect on past injustices and make practical amends.

Paradigm shift

These are small evidences that a paradigm shift is beginning to take place and challenging established attitudes. The task is no longer to struggle for an increasing share of the inexhaustible wealth of the planet, but to cooperate in the management of our fragile environment. When market forces are allowed to govern the use of what are increasingly recognised as scarce resources, the outmoded philosophy, perhaps appropriate in a less densely populated planet, is now likely to foster a competition which moves toward military acquisition of oil, water or food. International debt is facing the world system of economics with a crisis that is not going to be solved simply by a more skillful use of banking practice which gives advantage to the rich instead of ensuring justice.

In the religious sphere, the mind-set which idealised the Crusades is giving way to a new attitude to the other world faiths. In the past it has approached them in a spirit of rivalry or combative evangelism. It now needs to demonstrate that kind of 'good news-giving' which finds value in the unlike and therefore takes the risk of making common cause with Hindus, Muslims, Jews and Buddhists, looking for similarities and not areas of conflict.

Because we have moved into a different situation where inter-dependence and not rivalry at every level seems to be the way of survival, peace and peace-making genuinely become desirable, blessed, qualities. The argument for the new perception may start from the breakdown of the existing world order.

Fear however will not build the vision of the earth as the home or household. The

Biblical emphasis is rather on celebration. The psalms praise God for creation and invite us to delight in the space, the large room, the rich heritage in which we are set. It is people who are in love with their home and not those who fear for their own survival who will be the prophets of a new understanding.

How is such a new attitude to develop? This depends on how human nature is understood. One perception is that it is fundamentally flawed and therefore there must be some form of containment, coercion or threat, which will control the evil. If the dominant consideration is sin which requires policing, will not the police themselves be corruptible? Who guards the guards, was the old conundrum.

Trust and risk

While history shows a great deal of dehumanising tyranny and the abuse of others, it can also be argued that everybody retains the image of God, a quality which responds to generosity and grace. To trust this is the risk that God takes in the incarnation.

In terms of S. Matthew's Gospel Jesus rejects the twelve legions of angels, a celestial coercive power, and goes the lonely way of the cross which takes the risk of powerlessness as being that which ultimately changes human nature from within.

The major question which faces humanity at this point in its history is whether it can move from an anxious retention of control to a reliance on grace. Chairman Mao declared as a realistic politician that 'power proceeds from the barrel of a gun'.

If this is the last word then the race is on to create or acquire the largest gun for oneself. We will be committed to a faith in militarism which is likely to end in annihilation. The attempts to curb the arms trade, the promotion of a nuclear non-proliferation treaty and the like small practical steps will be brave attempts to move to a better world but will prove ultimately futile unless they relate to another dynamic which stems from a commitment to love and justice as effective values.

Peace-making will not be achieved by the philosophy of violence which 'knocks heads together' or 'teaches the aggressor a lesson'. It depends on an alliance between the sons and daughters of God who are the peacemakers. They are present in every violent situation but perhaps need to be encouraged to take their authority by those who in spite of centuries of conditioning have found that quality in themselves and are prepared to trust in it.

The Right Reverend Michael Hare Duke, a member of the Third Order, is Bishop of S. Andrew's, Dunkeld and Dunblane in the Scottish Episcopal Church.

Minister's Letter

Sister Cecilia, Minister General of the First Order Sisters, writes:



As I travel around the Provinces, I am pleased to discover that the subjects of peace and justice are high on the lists of concern of many sisters and brothers in our three Orders. Intercession - letters suggested by Amnesty International - peace fellowships - ecumenical efforts - demonstrations - these are but a few of the ways in which the Society of S. Francis seeks to serve these causes.

It has long been recognised that there can be no true peace where there is injustice. Whether on an international, national, city or neighbourhood level,

there will always be unrest and strife as long as men and women are oppressed, subjugated or treated as less than human. Justice at its most basic proclaims that every person has fundamental needs of food and water, love, nurturing and freedom - all essential to life. Justice demands that ways be found to meet such humanitarian needs. Where food is concerned there would be enough for all, if it was distributed to meet necessity and not to promote financial profit.

Justice for the Christian proclaims that everyone has value in the sight of God, who confronts and challenges us with the less recognisable injustice engendered by prejudice, Phariseism, racism, class barriers and exclusivism. We have to look at the violence within ourselves, while deploring the violence which brutalises, tortures and maims. As Christians and especially as Franciscans, we must be on guard against thinking in terms of, and the claiming of rights for,

ourselves. We have no rights; all is gift. All that comes to us is a trust and belongs to God. There are no rights in the dominion of heaven except the right to receive the unutterable and inexhaustible love of God revealed in Jesus and the right to offer to God through the Holy Spirit all that we are and have. To expect and seek rights makes mockery of the total Christ event, for God in Jesus surrendered all rights; our Lord claimed nothing except 'Abba, Father.'

'Keep us faithful, O God, to the inspiration of blessed Francis, that seeking nothing for ourselves, we may bring true riches to the world; through him who gave us himself, Jesus Christ our Saviour.'

Cecilia, C.S.F.

Resources for youth

The issue of youth crime and truancy has been much in the news recently. The tabloid press in particular has run many sensational articles, offering simplistic solutions. Government ministers, in the glare of this publicity, can offer only further punitive measures.

But so often it is forgotten that we are discussing often complex situations involving real young people with a variety of problems. It is important that we hear the voices of those children and those who have first hand knowledge of their lives.

Br Benjamin has been working as a Senior Education Social Worker in this area for two years. One of his responsibilities is trying to ensure that children participate in education as required by law. His observations are his own but they reflect his shared experience with colleagues working with young people in Birmingham.

My particular patch of the inner city has been ministered to over the years by both SSF and CSF in various ways, including links with S. Paul's parish and Church Centre. It is a mixed faith, culturally varied neighbourhood which has areas of deprivation, high unemployment and poverty. Prostitution and drug dealing are highly visible activities. Against such a background, decent people struggle to live decent lives. Meanwhile central and local government are locked in battle over budgets and rate capping, so little is done.

'For young people in this inner city environment life is hard. They become more and more disaffected, vulnerable, and exploitable. My primary clients are pupils with special needs, or whose participation in education is at risk. We offer services to parents in order to help such pupils. Our work is supplemented by churches,

mosques, temples, and voluntary agencies who try to plug some of the gaps left by the dwindling resources of an over-stretched social services. Anyone working in the inner city with young people soon realises diminishing resources are often reflected in diminishing results.

'But I know and believe, from past experience of working with young offenders, that certain learned behaviour can be unlearned. If young people are valued and given a sense of worth, change can happen. It is this hope which makes the work worthwhile. In the past year I have closely monitored eight young people who could have classed as "no hoppers". All of them were in their last year at school and were persistent truants.

'They had missed so much school that

they had not been entered for GCSEs and therefore saw no reason for attending. I placed them with two agencies who specialise in working with such youngsters and have seen them respond to education, work placement, and develop necessary skills for the next stage of their lives. Sadly, one of the agencies, Barnardo's, which pioneered much of the work, will cease to function at the end of the summer term because of lack of funding. So, yet another much needed resource is lost.

'If we believe young people are the future, let politicians and others with responsibility not forget those who are most vulnerable in our inner cities. They have the right to an education but above all to human dignity. There is much that we can do, but we have to be given the resources.'

Subscriptions for 1993

(one copy, three issues a year)

U.K., Europe & Surface Mail to all countries..... £3.00
Air Mail outside Europe..... £4.50
U.K. & Europe — please send to:
Subscriptions Secretary, The Friary, Hilfield, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 7BE.
Please make cheques payable to The Society of Saint Francis.
America & Canada — Mrs. Edward Webb, Fairhaven, C-092, 7200 Third Avenue, Sykesville, MD 21784-5214, U.S.A.

Australia — Please send individual subscriptions by Sterling International Money Order to The Friary, Hilfield, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 7BE, U.K.
New Zealand — Mr. Harry Hepple, Parsons Road RD2 Tuakau, New Zealand.
(Individual overseas subscribers please pay by STERLING BANK DRAFT or INTERNATIONAL MONEY ORDER. Thank you).
We do not normally send receipts.



Peace and violence

by Terry Tastard

Issues of peace and violence never float in a vacuum. So here are two examples to help us think about everyday life in Britain today.

The first example comes from a headmaster addressing a meeting I attended of clergy and pastoral ministers. 'You know,' he said, 'teachers get lots of criticism over the standards and content of teaching today. But who criticises newspapers like *The Sun* over headlines like, 'Up Yours, Delors'? That sort of headline does influence attitudes, you know.' Listening to him brought home to me for the first time the coarseness and implicit violence found in a significant stream of British newspaper life.

The second example comes from a visit I made to a family. The father sat in front of me for nearly an hour, playing a martial arts computer game with a friend. Figures emerged on a screen to punch, kick and somersault, with appropriate sound effects. It's difficult to know which was more depressing: the sight of an adult playing this game, or the thought that this was an amusement which often mesmerises children. So much violence, and all of it made to seem unreal.

Fear and hatred

It is probably impossible to find any one single cause for violence. But underlying much, perhaps most aggression, is fear and hatred of the other person. The other - the one different to ourselves - is the enemy. And if there is a past history of bitterness and strife with the other, is violence not justified? We know what *we* might do! Revenge and self-protection mean that we must strike first...Recent events in the former Yugoslavia have shown us how such attitudes can be nurtured and transmitted from one generation to another, until they burst out in new acts of war.

Against this deep weakness, this running sore in human character, Jesus appears with a simple message: No one is the enemy. Indeed, the whole category of enemy is to be subverted: 'Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons and daughters of your father who is in heaven' (Mt. 5: 44-5). Jesus recognises the category of evil (Mt. 5:39) but calls on us to respond in a way that will be free of all intentions of revenge and retaliation. Only in this way can the cycle of violence be broken.

Indeed, part of the message of the Risen One in our midst is precisely this: that wounds no longer cry out for vengeance. Christ appears among us, bearing the wounds we have inflicted, but his message is 'Peace be with you' (Jn. 20:26). He who forgives calls us to do likewise. There are to be no more human sacrifices.

Franciscan tradition has hewn closely to this message. It is often said that Francis set out on a straightforward imitation of Jesus and a literal obedience to his injunctions. Put thus, it makes Francis look rather naive, and overlooks how this apparently simple imitation enables a deep intuitive understanding of the gospel message.

Take, for example, the Rule of 1221. Sure enough, in ch.14 we find Francis citing Mt. 5:39 to say that the brothers should not resist evil aggression, but should offer the other cheek to one who slaps them. But this injunction is much more than a call to weakness. Rather, it is a gospel call to vulnerability. It is *risk* - and thus *courage* - that Francis expects to find among his followers.

Take ch.7 of the same rule, where we find Francis saying that Franciscans should not claim ownership of any place in a way that repels others: 'Everyone who comes to them, friend or foe, rogue or robber, must be made welcome.' Welcome the enemy; welcome the other; and in so doing, erode the difference between friend and enemy to make each person your friend. Early Franciscans seem to have understood Francis quite clearly on this count.

Thirteenth century Europe was covered in deep forests, which were dark symbols, as many fairy tales bear witness to this day, housing desperate people in a criminal netherworld. Many Franciscan houses were on the edge of polite society, between the farms and forests, and quietly reached out a hand to the violent dispossessed people in the latter. A charming story in the *Mirror of Perfection* (ch.66) tells of friars setting out into the woods with baskets of eggs, cheese, bread and wine to win the robbers from their violent way of life.

Taking risks

Perhaps, though, the charming nature of the story blinds us to the risk attached to such a venture. Risk, not just from the robbers, but from the scorn of citizens who knew better than the friars that you could not trust such scum... But then again, the Franciscan way of life refused to acknowledge such worldly-wise categories. Francis even expected members of what we would call the Third Order not to bear arms (First Rule of the Third Order, 5:16), which caused outrage when some of the brothers of penance refused civic commands to fight in the militias of their city-states.

The same eroding of categories seems to underlie Francis' love of the lepers. He admits to them being social outcasts only so that he can enjoin his followers to be glad to live among them (1221, ch.9).

There is one place where Francis does speak of enemies, and that is in what is sometimes called the 'Missionary Statute',

ch.16 of the Rule of 1221, which refers to 'those who are going among the Saracens and other non-believers'. This says that the brothers 'wherever they may be, should remember that they gave themselves and abandoned their bodies to the Lord Jesus Christ. And for love of him, they must make themselves vulnerable to their enemies, both visible and invisible.' This is followed by scriptural citations about persecution and losing life.

Perhaps Francis, being human, shared the fear of Europe facing a spiritually, militarily and culturally powerful Islam. On the other hand, the whole call to vulnerability is one which disarms those who undertake it. To follow Christ, who gave himself up to those who hunted him, Franciscans must be prepared to embrace persecution, hatred and contempt, and all this without retaliation.

A man of strong passions

Moreover, the reference here to bodies being given over is significant. Francis was someone of strong passions, immensely aware of the body. Despite his dualism, Francis took the body seriously. It was not something accidental to who we were. Like the true follower of the incarnate Lord, he knew the importance of human flesh. And here, the bodies of his followers giving themselves to the world becomes a kind of eucharist. Those who have given themselves to the Lord must be prepared like him to be broken and given to the world.

Witness to the gospel, in other words, *might*, after all, take you among enemies. But the opportunity for witness through steadfast love is not diminished but increases. To preach the gospel is to be exposed to hostile powers, but if for this you are broken then you share your Lord's suffering and your Lord's victory. Suffering is a form of being in the presence of Christ.

Francis knew well that you did not have to go to the Saracens to suffer. His life among the lepers and his life of poverty had exposed him to ridicule and blows. He had refused to conform to the wisdom of society, to the 'us' and 'them' divisions. But this, too, was a part of his peacemaking.

Then, as now, justice and peace were inseparable. It was the way of the cross, as well as the way of eucharist, and began with the vulnerability of Bethlehem. In this world, where violence can pervade not only headlines but even children's computer games, we are called not only to offer bread but (much more costly, much more difficult) to be bread ourselves. This calling is the opposite of that weary, dog-eared, adage: 'If you want peace, prepare for war.' Rather, those who are emptied find themselves filled, and those who die find that they live. There is no way to peace; peace is the way.

Terry Tastard is a Roman Catholic deacon and discusses Francis in his book The Spark in the Soul: spiritual and social justice.

The boys with no birthdays

by Peter Walker



Street children in Colombia

This piece is adapted, with the author's permission, from Fr Peter Walker's articles in the Walsingham Review. Fr Peter is Assistant Administrator of the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham and founder of the charity Let the Children Live! which aims to direct funds to the various indigenous projects working with the street-children of Colombia.

On 4th October 1992 a group of boys aged between eight and twelve had a very special birthday party. It was a wonderful occasion for them because it was the first time that they had ever had an official birthday to celebrate.

They had arrived at Los Amigos de Ternat Boys' Home near the city of Cali, Colombia, with no papers and no idea of their real date of birth. They decided to adopt the feast of S. Francis as their birthday because Br Oscar, who runs their Home, is a Franciscan.

I have been involved with Colombia since 1982 when I became stranded there whilst on holiday. Running short of money, I spent most of my time wandering around the streets: and that was how I met the children. When they found that I didn't have anything worth stealing, a group of these children 'adopted' me. Eventually I became so concerned about my new friends that I went to seek help for them from the local (Roman Catholic) Archbishop. My meeting with this saintly man changed my life. Through him, I became involved with the work the Church is doing with the street-children. Now I usually go over there twice a year to spend my holidays working with the children. That was how I met Br Oscar.

Los Amigos de Ternat Boys' Home was set up in 1988 and is a new and very small foundation, run by the young Franciscan. When I went there at the beginning of 1992, I found him caring for some 25 boys aged between 4 and 14 in an extremely cramped

but very happy building in a little village near the city of Cali. When I visited again in the autumn, he had managed to extend the Home to accommodate an extra 10 children. But despite the valiant efforts of Br Oscar and other larger organisations, a recent study showed that there are more than 500 children in Cali alone who receive absolutely no care whatsoever living on the streets.

When a family disintegrates in the poverty, squalor and violence of a Colombian slum, the girls are usually the first to be taken in by relations or friends, and the last to be abandoned or to run away. They also find it easier to find work as domestic servants. So nearly all those children living on the streets are boys. In September I met a 10 year-old boy who had

been raped, but such abuse of street-children is so commonplace that no-one bothered to report it. At least he is safe now, and he is receiving proper treatment for the venereal disease with which he was infected. We must pray that he won't prove to be HIV positive.

The girls who do end up on the streets are unlikely to stay there for long. No matter how young they are, they normally disappear from the streets into brothel-based prostitution. Of course the suffering of these girls is as great as that of the boys, but their problems are different and require different solutions.

In Medellin, for example, the Salesian Sisters at Casa Mama Margarita make contact with girls from the slums aged between seven and twelve before they actually end up on the streets. The Sisters invite the girls to attend their day centre, and those who are found to be in moral or physical danger are taken into care in their Home outside the city. It is wonderful to see how the love of the Sisters can transform the lives of girls who have suffered so much.

Tragically, the situation of the children who are still on the streets remains very dangerous. Whilst I was there in September there were more than 80 murders in one weekend in Medellin alone, and inevitably some of the victims of all this violence were children. I attended the funeral of a boy who had been killed when a group of so-called 'popular militia' opened fire at random during a disco in a park. I also visited a 14 year-old called Juan-Guillermo who had had both legs blown off by a grenade.

I went out again for Christmas. It may seem a strange time to be away from my work at the Shrine, but Walsingham is very quiet at Christmastide. As we celebrate the birth of the child who 'came unto his own, and his own received him not,' I felt that the best place for me to find him would be in Colombia among the boys with no birthdays.

More information about Let the Children Live! (Charity Reg. No. 1013634) can be obtained from P.O.Box 11, Walsingham, Norfolk, NR22 6EH.





Practising peace

by Greta Brooks

When I joined the Society of Friends (Quakers) in 1952 I spent much time reading *Advices and Queries*, a booklet which Friends use for devotional, disciplinary and self-examination purposes.

I grew particularly fond of the postscript to brethren in the north issued by a meeting of elders at Balby in 1656 which is quoted at the end:

Dearly beloved Friends, these things we do not lay upon you as a rule or form to walk by, but that all, with the measure of light which is pure and holy, may be guided; and so in the light walking and abiding, these things may be fulfilled in the Spirit not from the letter, for the letter killeth but the Spirit giveth life.

It has enabled me to come to terms with the practical implications of Friends' historic peace testimony. I was drawn to the Advice, 'Bring the whole of your life under the ordering spirit of Christ. Live adventurously.' At that time I was caring for a husband, a young family and elderly parents, so it was natural for me to focus on the more specific Advice: 'Endeavour to make your home a place of peace and happiness where the presence of God is known. Try to live simply.'

Hungarian broadcast

Imre Nagy, broadcasting from Budapest in 1956 his appeal to the West for help to withstand Russian tanks, had a profound effect on me and my determination to find peaceful ways of dealing with conflict.

By the '60s my family responsibilities were diminishing and, as I was not in paid employment, I had time to work for peace outside the home.

The Quaker Query on our Peace Testimony says:

Do you faithfully maintain our witness against all war, and all preparation for it, as inconsistent with the spirit and teachings of Christ? Do you live in the virtue of that life and power which takes away the occasion of all wars? Are you always ready, with God's help, to work for reconciliation between individuals, groups and nations?

I have great difficulty with international affairs and I am not capable of contributing anything significant to solving problems between nations. Therefore I choose to work for reconciliation between individuals and groups.

The first opportunity was an invitation to join a committee set up to allow all the Churches in Lambeth to speak with one voice to the officials of the new Borough of Lambeth established in 1965. Because I offered to type letters and minutes for the first Chairman, I became Secretary to the Committee and remained Secretary, with

increasing responsibility, for a long time.

By the '70s I had been drawn into the Church sponsored Brixton Workshop on police/community relations, set up because of concern over the relationships between police and young black people. By the '80s I was working with the police, through the Community/Police Consultative Group, to understand the difficulties and needs of both sides and where possible to reconcile groups and individuals.

The dramatic presentation of the underlying conflicts within the Borough in the Brixton disturbances of 1981 brought me into close contact with a Quaker group called the Quaker Peace Action caravan, with whom I had already worked through my local Quaker meeting. I invited them to run a workshop for Brixton community workers in the aftermath of the disturbances.

The Quaker Peace Action Caravan toured the United Kingdom from May 1980 to December 1985. They were funded by Quaker Peace and Service. Their brief was to work with those already awake to peace issues, in order to awaken and mobilise those as yet uncommitted. As a member of their Support Group, who travelled with them for a brief fortnight, I can testify to the imagination and skill the team brought to the training they offered to peace activists, Quaker meetings, schools and other groups working for a less violent world.

The actual caravan, a large van that carried both equipment and personnel, bore the slogan, 'World peace will only come through the action of ordinary people like yourself'. In their approach to the wide variety of people they trained, they put into practice the Quaker Advice to 'seek to know in your inmost heart that each human being is unique, precious, a child of God.'

When their project ended, they left scattered throughout the country peace

enthusiasts skilled in processes and techniques for using conflict for positive change. Apart from sharing their skills with me they taught me one particular lesson: how essential it is for peace workers to be professional in their approach, prepare thoroughly, have adequate resources and be on time and keep to time.

When the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill was before Parliament in 1983, the Brixton Workshop of the Brixton Council of Churches noted the possibilities for lay people to be involved in the informal resolution of complaints against the police.

Mediation course

This led me to attend a course on mediation run in London by two American Quakers. Later I learnt that they were members of the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) and that mediation was only a small part of their work. The main task they set themselves is to explore alternatives to violence with longterm prisoners. They do so because they believe:

that a life lived with dignity and self-respect, and the opportunity for self-actualisation, is the birthright of every person;

that only when this birthright is made real for all of us, will we have a just and peaceful world;

that there is in the universe a power that is able to transform hostility and obstructiveness into cooperation and community, and to do justice among us; and

that transforming power is always present - it is in you, in your opponent and it surrounds you both. It is able to work through people who are open to it. But it is not something that humans use - rather it is something that uses us.

This, for me, is a restatement of personal experience that connects with the Quaker concept of there being 'that of God in everyone' with which one can communicate so that 'the evil may be weakened and the good raised up'. As stated by AVP, I can see how it may be used experientially with the whole community, with or without an acknowledged faith, creed or religion. There is a small group of AVP trainers now

Theme prayer



O God,
by whose inspiration
Francis became a little brother to all
and did not fear to take the message of peace
and love even into the heart of the enemy:
give us, who follow him,
a like spirit of reconciliation and generosity
in our own day;
through Jesus Christ our Lord . . .

(The Daily Office SSF p 281)

in Britain, who are just beginning to work in our prisons.

The Lambeth Mediation Service was set up in February 1990 with two purposes. One, to offer mediation of disputes between neighbours in Lambeth; and two, to spread within Lambeth the concept of conciliation and the positive use of conflict. This is peace-making at a local level.

Conflict of interests and needs is commonplace. Mostly we manage to compromise and make decisions. But longterm conflict that is not resolved tends to escalate and lead to unhappiness, misery or violence. In the Mediation Service we meet all three. By seeking that of God in each disputant - and all of us would not use that phraseology - we are affirming and empowering them. When we succeed in reconciling them or improving their situation we may well be raising up the good and weakening the evil..

Joy in achievement

We do not talk about transforming power but without giving it a name most of us have experienced the wonder of seeing a situation transformed. There is joy when understanding and communication are achieved and when a disputant takes over and gets results without us. There is sadness when a disputant cannot face the consequences of our contacting the second party.

Some of the disputants will have a firm grasp of the idea of mediation and perhaps also conflict resolution. In addition to that we have trained over 50 people who live or work in Lambeth in the mediation process and its skills. I have not been involved with training recently but I still hear of trainees saying half way through the course, 'This is changing my life'.

This gives me confidence to suggest that through disputants and trained volunteers we are beginning to achieve our second aim of getting the idea of positive conflict resolution back into the community. Violence, however you define it, leads to more violence. It must be good when even one more person begins to think that there are alternatives to violence.

Greta Brooks is a Quaker by conviction. She is one of the coordinators of the Lambeth Mediation Service.

Copyright

© The Society of Saint Francis, First Order European Province. All rights reserved.

International Standard Serial No. ISSN 0532/579X.

Opinions expressed in articles are those of the writers and are not necessarily those of the Editorial Board, nor of the Society of Saint Francis.

Permission to reproduce any part of this publication must be asked in writing.

All roads lead to . . .

by Sister Jean Te Puna

As I sit here pondering how to begin this article, I have realised that it is 12 months to the day since I left Phyllis, Fay, Maureen and Denise standing on the other side of the barrier, and headed off to find the plane that would fly me away from my beloved Aotearoa/New Zealand and towards the UK and a new chapter in the life of Jean Te Puna.

March 9, 1992 now seems eons away...12 months...a lifetime. In that space of time my journey has taken me, geographically, all over the UK, and spiritually, to new and undiscovered territory.

I left Aotearoa with very few expectations, ready to embrace wholeheartedly whatever God might drop in my lap.

It took my body several weeks to adapt to the March cold, but the welcome to Compton made up for that. Before even a week had passed I felt that I belonged, that I had slotted into a place that had been tailor-made for me and very soon found it difficult to comprehend that, only a few weeks before, I hadn't known these sisters. And that has been the pattern everywhere that I have been this past 12 months...being welcomed with warmth and generosity by sisters and brothers, and feeling a deep sense of belonging to this community of people... I begin to understand more fully the feelings in Jesus' parable of the Lost Son being met on the road by his father and so wholeheartedly welcomed home.

Home...I had 'journeyed home' to community here in England, yet I had left my home 12,500 miles away. Very early on I began to miss my home, Aotearoa, with an intensity that took me by surprise. I missed people, but more especially I missed Aotearoa, the Land. In the words of Joy Cowley, I longed for

...the rejoicing
of bare feet on a damp forest path,
the wonder of light thrown against
a kaleidoscope of tree-ferns,
the myriad textures of leaves
the embrace of moss-clad trees
...to hear God's voice in greenness:
in the singing of sap
the conversations of the leaves, the
whispering
of shoot and stem, root sap and cell....

Language, too, powerfully reminded me that I was in an alien land, out of my culture - different ways of saying things, different names for the same objects, having to learn a new vocabulary of brand names, people not understanding my accent, and most especially, being brought up sharp daily, in chapel and often in the media, by use of



masculine terms to refer to women as well as men. I was so unused to that, and it served to remind me every day that I was travelling down a different road.

Even my relationship with God was assaulted. Our prayer Book in NZ avoids using masculine or feminine pronouns for God, which gives each person the space to worship God in whatever concept is right for them. Suddenly, four times a day, I was being narrowed down into using only He's and Him's.

Yet God is good, faithful, surprising! Through prayer and reflection, and with the help of some wise people I found some new roads to lead me through the dense fog of isolation.

I learned to hold more lightly to 'home', stopped subconsciously comparing things there with things here, and came to love *this* land in all its beauty and ancient wisdom.

I met hundreds of wonderful people in all sorts of situations, who took me as I am and rejoiced in the new roads I led them down, and showed me some of their own.

I became at home in the rhythm and roots of Compton and Hilfield, in the peaceful, prayer-filled oasis of Brixton, in the lively, witty, homely community of Plaistow and in the excitingly multicultural, multifaith environment of Birmingham. November 11th brought joy that 15 years of the priestly ministry of women enjoyed in NZ was no longer something to separate me from my brothers and sisters in England. And underpinning everything has been my journey along new roads in knowing and relating to God and to all of life.

Now, though I'm looking forward to returning 'home' to Aotearoa/NZ, there is real sorrow and pain in leaving this new home which is full of holy places and much-loved people. Heartfelt thanks and AROHA (love) to all who have given me so much on this part of my journey. Joy Cowley again:

And if I go into another area
and walk a mile or two with someone
else,

I return as a larger being.

The love of my own road is deepened,
the appreciation of other roads is widened
and I am blessed in the knowledge
that all roads lead to God.

Aotearoa Psalms: by Joy Cowley has been specially imported for the shop at Hilfield price £6.50 (or £7.00 inc postage).

Justice and Peace Links

by Sister Pat



The Justice and Peace Links organisation was set up in 1979 by the Roman Catholic Conference of Major Religious Superiors (now the Conference of Religious), with Anglican religious communities joining in 1986. I have represented CSF for the past four years.

The hope is that every religious community should have a link person whose role is to stimulate awareness of justice and peace issues within communities and encourage action where appropriate. We meet together twice a year, for a day at the AGM, and at a weekend conference at which we explore a topic related to issues of justice and peace.

So over recent years we have looked at poverty, 'the cry of the poor, the call of Christ'; at some of the implications (in the light of the Kingdom of God) of the single European Market; at the example of the work of the Base Christian Communities in Latin America; at the spirituality of Justice. We have also helped each other to keep informed on current areas of concern, for example during the Gulf War, and over such issues as the Asylum Bill, which by the time you read this will almost certainly have become law.

Involved in the same concerns is the Conference of Religious Social Justice Desk, which was set up in order to help communities respond to social justice issues. That the Social Justice Desk and Justice and Peace Links work closely together has become something of an 'in' joke this year at the CSF Brixton house: Helen Julian works for the Desk, and I am on the core group of the Links. To say that the Desk provides administrative support for the Links certainly has a different feel to it when you know that you are going to have breakfast with the person for whom you've just spent the evening creating work! The Desk also has a considerable amount of resource material on social justice issues and produces a Newsletter four times a year with considerable information on a variety of topics.

For me, discovering these subjects and doing my best to pass the knowledge on to my sisters is important, because they are about how we work for the coming of that Kingdom of God for which we pray every day. And that therefore means that it cannot be just about talk, although being properly informed and understanding the issues is important. One of the things that I find most stimulating in being part of the group is the opportunity it presents for learning about the sorts of things other people are involved in, but that is also challenging as I am faced with the question, if they are prepared to get their hands dirty, what reason have I for not?

And recently I have experienced how much concerned, ordinary people like me can do. One of the bits of information that came my way at Justice and Peace Link last autumn was of a training day organised by the Social Justice Desk and the Churches National Housing Coalition, an organisation formed out of concern at the growing problem of homelessness and housing need.

The training was in preparation for a lobby of Parliament, the intention being that in every constituency there should be a group who would investigate the situation locally and then, on December 1st, the day of the lobby, present their findings to their MP together with how these related to the four policy objectives of the CHNC: greater investment in the provision of affordable rented housing, with a target figure of 100,000 new homes each year; improvements in choice and quality for all tenants; further measures to tackle the growing problem of homelessness, especially for young people; reform and restructuring of housing subsidies in order to direct support to those most in need.

I went to the training day thinking that I would offer to help whoever was organising this group in my constituency and so was considerably alarmed to

discover that no-one had so far volunteered. With great trepidation, I offered to take on the organiser's role. But it proved to be one of the most interesting and satisfying things I have done.

I met with three others, Anglican and Methodist, who each had considerable length of local experience, and we set about informing ourselves about the housing situation in Lambeth. What I found most striking was the willingness of everyone we approached, the local housing department, housing associations, advice centres, to provide information, helping us to build up a picture of how the inadequacies of current policies are experienced 'at the sharp end'.

On December 1st we were, sadly, able to spend only a snatched few minutes (how we snatched them would make an article in itself!) conveying this to our MP who, though sympathetic to our aims, was otherwise occupied discussing the Maastricht Bill, but none of us felt that this invalidated being part of the lobby. Over 70% of the English parliamentary constituencies were represented at Westminster on the day (Welsh members were seen as a group and a Scottish lobby organised separately.) We all got cold waiting outside in the queue to get in.

Because of the numbers some groups were unable to see their member, despite having an appointment, but there was a tremendous feeling of being part of something significant; and excitement in experiencing the Church, across denominations, using its position wisely and well to express the informed concerns of wide-ranging groups of people. The very fact that there were too many people for the Commons' lobby system to handle is indicative of the success of the day; whether it will have helped to encourage the necessary changes in policy remains to be seen. For the Church coalition the lobby was only the beginning, the focus is now on building on the links that were made at local level, with MPs and in some cases with ministers. I hope to continue to be involved in that process.



Religious demonstrating with Christian CND

Changing hearts

by Brother John Nicholas

'There can be no ecumenism worthy of the name without a change of heart.' So stated the Vatican decree on ecumenism in heady times, when windows were being opened, through which gusted fresh winds of the Spirit.

The language of ecumenism was to become the popular expression of renewal. A vision of praying and working together, of fellowship and cooperation, was to remind all Christians of what had been lost, forgotten or obscured by the churches. The yearning of the heart for unity was not to be fulfilled by strategies for uniformity, but by a growing reverence for the traditions of others, casting new light on what our own traditions have to offer, the mutual enrichment creating something new for God and His world.

What follows gives a flavour of the wide range of ecumenical contacts within SSF over the last year or so, some quite new ventures, others continuing and building on long and well established links.

Courses of joint study continue. Our novices in Liverpool are linked to intercongregational novice study units and from that a Roman Catholic novice director is invited in to facilitate group work amongst the brothers there. Those from Compton and Hilfield have been involved with novices of Roman Catholic Orders in a course organised by the Association of Novice Directors. Amos and John Francis have been part of the West Midlands Ministerial Training Course for priests and ministers along with Methodists and members of the United Reformed Church. Austin has been engaged on a Diploma in Franciscan Studies at the Franciscan Study Centre at Canterbury. He says, 'when you pray, work and enjoy life together, then differences begin to be unimportant, including those of denomination.'

Pilgrimages and conferences abroad remind us of our place in a wider ecumenical context. Alan and Samuel have both led pilgrimages to Assisi. Raymond Christian has been involved with Hosanna House in Lourdes working alongside a Roman Catholic chaplain with groups of handicapped children and adults. Jude, Michael and Timothy have been on an ecumenical pilgrimage to Lourdes with men and women living with HIV/AIDS, SSF providing a chaplain alongside that of the Roman Catholics, with three Roman Catholic sisters in the group. David Francis and John Nicholas attended a Conference of Young Franciscans in Assisi. Damian, Brian, Joyce and Nan had attended the 1991 Assisi "Europe" Chapter, followed by an invitation to Damian to go to stay with OFM Conventuals in Prague. Harold continues to keep up his many links with hermitages and monasteries in France.

Foreign visits are reciprocated. Fr Terry Sutcliff, assistant superior to a French

community of hermits visits Glasshampton frequently. The abbot of Bec in France visited Hilfield. Plaistow and Alnmouth have had visits from Swedish Lutherans and Orthodox monks and Czech and German OFM Brothers. Benedict is in regular contact with a French OFM Brother who comes to do supply work in Glasgow twice a year.

Day to day work

Of course much of our ecumenical work is part of the day to day life and work of our brothers and sisters. One thinks of Donald and Marcus working within ecumenical prison chaplaincies; Mark Nicholas's close involvement with the Royal Army Chaplains Department at Bagshot, bringing together Anglican, Baptist, Roman Catholic, URC, Methodist and Jew; Benedict who works on a soup run organised by a Pentecostal Church; the very close links between Alnmouth and OFM Brothers in Gateshead; Plaistow involved in all manner of local projects and programmes, Homestore a Quaker furniture project to name but one, with Zacchaeus on its Management Committee; Hugh accompanied by a merry band of brothers and sisters participating in events like the Greenbelt Festival, where traditional church affiliations mean very little.

Our Franciscan ministry of hospitality encourages us to open our houses to all who want to come and share in a part of our lives. Hilfield has noticed an increased

interest from individuals and groups from house churches who are so often overlooked in the ecumenical equation.

Alnmouth regularly hosts URC, Methodist and Church of Scotland groups. Compton has been instrumental in setting up groups for those involved in spiritual direction and support, including Baptists, Methodists, Roman Catholics as well as Anglicans. Of the group of Anglicans, Baptists and Quakers that have been meeting at Compton Angela Helen says, 'It seems to be more united and effective each time we meet.'

In Belfast all the brothers are involved in inter-church activity, be it missions, prayer groups or community projects. The brothers have been instrumental in starting interdenominational 'Prayers for Our Land' in St. Anne's Cathedral, where one of them participates every day. David Jardine has started weekly interdenominational healing services in the Cathedral, which by all accounts are having a big impact.

It can soon be recognised that an article such as this can only skate the surface, but it must be appreciated that the background to the work of ecumenism is a whole unseen network of contacts and friendships, out of which come the more obvious signs like the recent Third Order appointment of an Ecumenical Officer, Elizabeth Coulter, or the setting up of the Assisi Ecumenical Desk. Undergirding the sharing and fellowship is the prayer for unity, perhaps most poignantly expressed by the Clares through their enclosure, linked with the Clares across the world.

At a time when we are faced by so many strains and challenges within our Anglican Communion, we can draw strength from SSF's witness to an ecumenical vision and commitment, a Franciscan witness to the brotherhood and sisterhood of all, for that which is drawing us together is so much more than that which divides us.

Poem



The mountains,
Red wave upon wave,
Stop at a row of palms
Where my grandmother
Once lived and died.
You are here,
Dark and lovely,
Jesus of the Palms;
Jesus of the Mountains.
Behind you,
The blue ocean
Wrapped in yellow and white.
I kiss your hands and feet.
I am your brother Thomas:
Child of this ocean,
These mountains.
There is blood in my mouth.

Thomas Carey SSF

The Cambridge Friary

The brothers at Cambridge continue our series of reports from individual houses.

15 Botolph Lane. It sounds rural - a narrow winding lane, on one side a country churchyard with ancient tombs and trees gives way to a high wall, and on the other a row of medieval cottages winds down to a group of Georgian houses. But all day long it is a thoroughfare bustling with cars and motorbikes.

Every hour, on the hour, there is chaos as students compete in crowds on bicycles - Botolph Lane is a short cut, between lectures, to and from Science and Engineering labs and lecture rooms. At night also it is a short cut - from pubs and discos! A great feature of our life is noise!

We have two of the tall houses - built about 1750. Each has four floors and a basement and each floor has one small room with an even smaller one (bathroom, laundry, kitchen, etc) attached. There is a boiler room in one basement and a chapel in the other. We were once six brothers, now only four, so one room has recently been turned into a library and another is a guest room. The supreme 'odd job man' who does these things is Edmund, who gladly threatens to mend anything - sometimes when it is already going rather well!

(Perhaps only SSF would put four men - mid-seventies, early sixties, mid-fifties and mid-thirties - together in such a confined space).

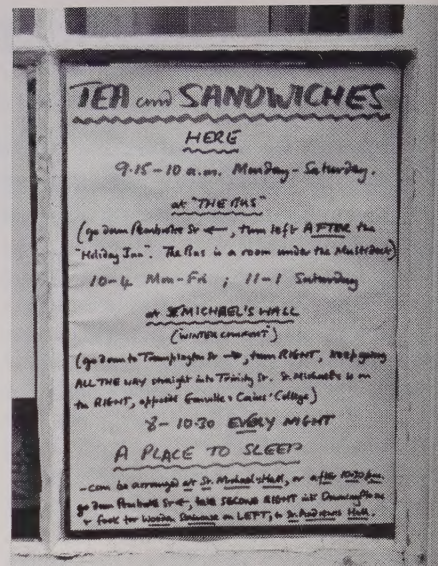
We have contrived to make one rather larger room in which to eat together, and entertain quite a lot. Food plays an important part in our ministry, and a very wide range of people come to join us. Students and others related to the University, ordinands, parishioners, people

passing through and others who reflect our personal ministries. Old boys and their wives from S. Francis School, Hooke, come to see Anselm. Edmund has a particular care for people who wouldn't quite fit in, who come from all over the place. Alistair has his contacts, and Michael lives in a perpetual past of godsons and their sons, old students and present students, and people who, like Anselm and Edmund, he first knew in Cambridge in the fifties. The door bell and two telephones ring constantly, and not infrequently at the same time.

All of which involves constant going up and down stairs. The business of living is a tax on time and patience. In a crowded house cleanliness and tidiness require working at, as does a careful schedule for cooking, and caring for the men, and a few women, who come every morning between 9.15 and 10.00 for tea and sandwiches. Sometimes ten or more, sometimes only two.

We pray at the church, of which Anselm is the vicar. Very few people actually live in the parish, but we get a good congregation for the mass each day, and rarely say morning or evening prayer without support. Those who come seem to value the new SSF Office Book, though there is ASB on Sundays, where at present eighty to a hundred come for the Sung Eucharist. Edmund does a great deal to assist Anselm in visiting etc. There have been tensions at times between the claims of the friary and the church, but these have recently been eased by a clearer separation of the roles of guardian and vicar. At present the major part of the preaching is done by the brothers.

S. Bene't's doesn't have much in the way of 'organisations' but it *does* have a reputation as a house of prayer, and even the invasion of vandals and others who misuse the church has not prevented that continuing. In the summer the invasion is of



tourists - thousands of them.

Alistair brings a distinctive contribution to the life of the friary. At the time of writing he is still working full time for the Psychological Treatment Service at Addenbrooke's Hospital. So he keeps us in touch with the real world, and his sometimes acerbic comments save us from too rigid a complacency. The fact that he, Edmund and Michael have all been in Cambridge for several years now gives a stability to the house, and a reassurance to those among whom we live, which they find valuable even if, in our occasional differences, we fail to notice it ourselves. It is a household in which it seems the members are ready to put everything to the test all the time! Which can be creative.

The dynamics of the house and church changed, inevitably, with the changes of personnel, and we are adjusting to being only four and having Anselm as vicar instead of Tom. Michael still has a fairly dispersed ministry outside Cambridge, particularly in the diocese as Assistant Bishop, but is spending more time in a ministry of counselling and spiritual direction - which in varying degrees is probably the principal work expressed in different ways by all the brothers.

It seems the friary exists to be a centre of love and friendship, which not too self-consciously reflects the Franciscan ethos as it has developed in SSF. We've been here now for over fifty years. There are always people who are surprised to discover us - many others who take us for granted, which is rewarding and reassuring.

It is of course, a great privilege to live in a place where there is so much music and art of all kinds, people with ideas who want to share them; and an opportunity to keep fresh and alert to all that is happening. It is also a challenge to be alive to God and his purpose for us all. In this sense it is a continuing opportunity to live among men and women, and make known the love of God for them. If there are disappointments there are also wonderful fulfilments. There is never a dull moment - and a lot for which to be thankful.



Anselm, Michael, Alistair and Edmund

Community Routes

►► Shared novice course

The group attending this course at Roehampton, London, two days each week, as well as 4 two-day residential sessions at Broadstairs, has comprised postulants, novices and novice directors (guardians) from 13 congregations, Roman Catholic and Anglican. CSF and SSF have participated this year for the first time.

The course helps novices reflect on, understand and interpret for themselves their experience of entering religious life. The programme features prayer and spirituality together with topics such as human sexuality, bereavement, ecclesiology, group skills, social justice, AIDS and the Church, and an introduction to the Bible.

Sessions are experiential and thought provoking, novices and directors learning from each other as much as from the tutors. Those attending have found it generally both stimulating and enjoyable.

►► Tertiaries at Taizé

Tertiaries Joyce and Don Skipp had no idea, when planning a recent visit to Taizé, that in the week they chose to go, the place would be teeming with Franciscans from all orders from all over the world.

'Brown habits were everywhere; we met brothers wearing cloth caps, others who sang and danced and those who juggled to proclaim the Gospel. All had been brought together by the special invitation of the brothers of Taizé.

'As tertiaries we had the unique opportunity to compare our home situations and the challenges we each have to face with other members of the Third Order from other continents. It was encouraging to discover that, bound by our common commitment to the way of S. Francis, we all share the same basic aims and hopes. We Tertiaries in the West may have much to learn from our sisters and brothers in the Philippines and Japan where the involvement of young people is prominent in the order.

'Although we appeared to be the only two members of the Third Order SSF from the UK, we did find two First Order brothers, Robert and Paul. Paul's talk on his work in Belfast was well received.

'A highlight of the week was a pilgrimage of solidarity as we joined with the brothers of Taizé to walk, singing, in a long serpentine column down through the forest to the hermit home dedicated to S.



Brother Alistair made his Life Profession on 27th February at S. Bene't's, Cambridge. With him are Brothers Damian, Kentigern John, the Bishop Protector, the Right Reverend Philip Goodrich, Bishop of Worcester, and Tristram.

Francis.

'Our week reached its climax in the sharing of a common eucharist on Sunday morning as we dispersed to our different countries rejoicing in the unity of the great Franciscan family.'

►► Term at Lincoln

January to March this year was spent by Hilary at Lincoln Theological College as 'religious in residence'. Each year in the Lent term a community is asked to send someone to live and work alongside the students, and to be there to offer a 'listening ear'. She enjoyed attending classes, talking with staff and students, experiencing a different kind of community, seeing the similarities and the differences from her own experience in CSF as well as having the opportunity to share her reflections on these. Duties were light - a session on SSF, a lecture on Franciscan spirituality, one sermon, and a quiet evening for the spouses of the students. What she will remember most is the warmth of the welcome and friendship extended her by all members of the College.

►► Birmingham meeting

A conference for those First Order brothers who are not reassured by the vote of November 11th 1992 was held recently in Birmingham. Br Michael, who was present, writes:

'After November 11th - what? On March

8th fifteen brothers met to ask that question. They represent altogether about 22 brothers who, for various reasons and in various degree are unhappy - some of them deeply - at the vote with a 2/3rd majority which passed the legislation to ordain women priests.

'The situation is not a simple one. Many of the brothers present are in favour of the ordination of women to the priesthood - but all are not in favour of the way in which the Church of England has acted.

'But it has happened. The question is how to react? They were assisted in their reactions by the Bishop Protector Philip Goodrich, the Bishop of Worcester - who is entirely in favour, and the Venerable George Austin, from York, who is a leading opponent. Some positive conclusions were reached.

'(1) It seems that no one, at present, will leave the Church of England: mostly on the grounds of loyalty to the religious vows and membership of the Franciscan family.

'(2) It was recognised that two traditions of catholicity have become established in the C of E. One is rooted in the Tractarian movement and its adherents are determined to observe the catholicity of Anglicanism. The other has increasingly looked to Rome as the ultimate goal and authority. Those of this latter tradition have felt most deeply a sense of 'bereavement' and should be respected for the pain they have felt.

'But pain will be felt by everyone. For instance, true to their position, sisters and brothers on both sides will at times feel unable to share in the eucharist, and of course there will be implications for work in parishes, etc.

'(3) The ultimate conclusion was that for the present we will have to live in the church and in SSF recognising these two 'integrities' - those in favour and those (for differing reasons) against. This will be a painful and costly business for SSF demanding a high degree of understanding and mutual compassion, and reflecting the dilemma of the whole church with its longing to hold to "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace".'

▶▶ Balkan Friaries

Catholic Franciscan friaries and churches in Croatia, Bosnia and Hercegovina have suffered greatly in the fighting. 30 friaries have been totally destroyed, and a further 46 have been damaged. Last autumn Br Hermann, Minister General of OFM, spent a week travelling around the region.

'Bosnia and Hercegovina,' he reported, 'continue to be torn apart by a modern war being fought in a medieval way - village against village, neighbour against neighbour, with heavy artillery trained on civilians and their homes, churches, libraries and museums.' The nearer the front line, the more urgent and impatient were the questions: 'What do you say about friars who want to join the military to protect our country and parishioners?' 'We are facing an enemy that has no conscience. How can Franciscans remain silent or passive in front of so many horrible atrocities that have been committed?'

In Baska Voda he met the faculty and 110 students from the minor seminary which used to be in Visoko near Sarajevo, until given a half hour by the military to evacuate it a year ago. They fled first of all to Italy for 4 months, then returned to Croatia and now live as refugees in a hotel in Baska Voda: 'this hotel has become a friary where fraternity is lived even more authentically than it is lived in some of our traditional places,' Br Hermann told them; 'It is almost impossible to live through the horrors of unjust war without putting our faith in the Beatitudes.'

▶▶ End of Society

Sr Ruth Mary, the last surviving member of the Society of the Incarnation of the Eternal Son, died on 27th November last year at the age of 95. Her death ends a chapter in the history of Anglican Franciscanism, as the SIES was the first active Anglican sisterhood to be inspired by the Rule of S. Francis. Founded in 1894, soon after the Society of the Divine Compassion, the sisters' first work was alongside SDC in Plaistow, work now continued by SSF.

Mother Gertrude Clare, the Foundress, was a bishop's daughter. She was a supporter of the Labour Party and a keen promoter of social causes. She and her sisters lived in great poverty and simplicity. In 1905 the Community moved to Birmingham where, amongst other work,



Paul Anthony, who made his Life Profession on 6th February at S. Barnabas', Balsall Heath, Birmingham, cuts the cake watched by Brother Donald. For the past three years, Paul Anthony has been working as an assistant warden for a day centre catering for the over sixty-fives. He says: "the overwhelming generosity of the parish, together with the support of brothers and sisters, my family and friends, made the day a very happy occasion for me."

they ran orphanages. It was here that Ruth Mary joined in the late 1920s.

The hostility of Bishop Barnes during his long episcopate in Birmingham (1924-53) to receiving vows made it hard for SIES to encourage vocations, and numbers dwindled. In 1967 the last four sisters decided to leave their convent in Alum Rock Road and live with the Community of the Holy Name, then at Malvern, now at Derby.

▶▶ Alnmouth

Concern has been expressed for the brothers at Alnmouth, working with considerably reduced numbers and now without James, who had been Guardian there until January. The regular programme of previous years has been reduced to one special event each month, although many still book for short visits.

The predicament of Alnmouth Friary is a clear sign that in this Province of SSF the First Order brothers are having to cope with an increasing average age, and that there are fewer brothers available. In spite of lifts and

washing up machines, recently installed, there remains a problem with staffing. Alan is presently Brother-in-Charge and Christopher remains guest brother. Do keep our Friary in the North East forward in your prayers as we live through these difficult times.

▶▶ David's prayer

Every Monday evening in S. Anne's Cathedral, Belfast, a new service of healing is held called 'Divine Healing Ministries'. Started by Br David Jardine, it centres on prayer for Ireland, and includes prayer for those who wish to receive healing on a personal basis. It is entirely inter-denominational, both in organisation and in conduct. Indeed, the co-chairman of the committee, alongside David, is a Roman Catholic Franciscan. The venture got off to a great start on the 1st February with an opening service attended by 600 people. Since then, weekly attendance has settled at about 150.

David's vision is that something will happen in Belfast similar to that which

happened in East Germany. People there used to meet in Lutheran churches on Monday evenings to pray. David writes: 'eventually these meetings became so crowded that they would spill out onto the street, and the prayer was taken even to the Berlin Wall. There is no doubt that all this prayer, over many years inside and outside eastern Europe, was a major factor in the events of 1989. It would be marvellous if these Monday evening services in S. Anne's could be a catalyst for the same work in Ireland.'

Anyone interested in supporting this venture in prayer should write to: Br David Jardine SSF, 75 Deepark Rd, Belfast BT14 7PW.

▶▶ Robert Dunlop RIP

Robert Dunlop collapsed and died suddenly on Christmas Day while staying with his cousins Tim and Pat Brown. Robert was born in 1928 in Hong Kong and did not come to this country till 1938. He was placed in a boarding school and his parents returned to the Far East; Robert did not see them again till 1947.

Always a shy and nervous child, the news of his parents capture by the Japanese resulted in a stutter from which he never recovered. He was sent to Irene Champenowne for therapy and she became a surrogate mother for Robert, retaining chief place in his memory for the rest of his life.

He was put in Hilfield by his parents in 1947: shortly afterwards they emigrated to Canada. Robert learnt carpentry, worked in the kitchen, and more recently was responsible for looking after the shop. He had hoped to join his family in Canada, but as time passed he had to accept that he would not be able to do so. More recently he had decided to try living on his own, and

was due to spend a trial period in an assessment flat early this year.

It seems a real mercy that death called upon him swiftly and painlessly whilst he was with people who did so much to help him find some sense of family belonging, a comfort which had eluded him throughout most of his life.

▶▶ Martin Sharp RIP

Martin Sharp died in Dorchester Hospital on March 5th.

Martin came to live at Hilfield in 1947. He was one of the most colourful people around - quite literally, for he was much attracted by the bright colours of plastic and PVC rainwear. He rang the bell to summon people to meals (food was also a great love of his), often startlingly dressed in a pink plastic mac and bright yellow souwester, irrespective of rain or sun.]

He also played the piano with great verve, practising regularly each day, though the sounds he created were not always closely related to the notes printed on the page. But his enthusiasm for music was enormous; in his younger days he thought nothing of cycling twenty miles each way to attend a concert.

Along with his zest for life, he was a person of great gentleness and kindness, always patient and courteous towards other residents even when his tolerance was not reciprocated. He also had a great love of the church - his father was a canon of Rochester Cathedral - and always prayed for bishops in any open intercessions.

Unquestionably, his stepmother Joan - always called 'Mother' - was the most important person in his life: he looked forward eagerly to staying with her, and a visit from Mother was the only thing that would encourage him to tidy and clean his room.

We offer our sympathy to Joan and his brother Robin. All our lives have lost some richness through his death.

▶▶ Round-up

Mark Nicholas has moved from Glasshampton to Plaistow...**Hugh** and **Alan Michael** have both been elected to Life Profession. Hugh will make his profession at Hilfield on 5th June and Alan Michael will make his in Glasgow at S. Serf's, Shettleton, on 8th May...**John Francis** will be ordained deacon on 4th July at Birmingham Cathedral, and will work part-time in the parish of S. Faith and S. Lawrence, Harborne...**Reginald** will leave his chaplaincy work at Chichester Theological College in June and will be living at Hilfield...

Roger Alexander is now working in Zimbabwe...**Thomas Carey** returns to the American Province at the end of May, after a visit to Assisi...**Daniel** has been reelected Minister Provincial of the Australia/New Zealand Province...**Timothy Joseph** has returned from the American Province and is now Deputy Minister Provincial of the Pacific Islands Province...**Douglas John** is now living at Hilfield...**Robert** is now to be known as **Robert Coombes**...

Terry is on leave of absence...**Robbie Asaph** made his First Profession at S. Columba's-by-the-Castle in Edinburgh on 27 March...**Freda** has moved from Birmingham to Compton Durville...**Jacqueline** has moved from Compton Durville to Birmingham...**Susan Frances** has moved from Compton Durville to Brixton...**Jean Te Puna** moved from Birmingham at the end of March and will be returning to Auckland NZ, via Taize, Assisi and San Francisco...**Moyra** made her First Profession on 6 March at Compton Durville...

POSTAL ADDRESSES

EUROPE

The Friary, **Alnmouth**, Alnwick, Northumberland NE66 3NJ. (0665 8302113)

Shepherd's Law, **Alnwick**, Northumberland NE66 2DZ.

S. Francis House, 113 Gillott Road, **Birmingham** B16 0ET. (021 454 8302)
(Telephone number for Minister Provincial only: 021 455-9784)

S. Michael's House, Soho Avenue, Handsworth, **Birmingham** B18 5LB.
(021 554 3521)

S. Elizabeth's House, 33 Hampton Road, Birchfield, **Birmingham** B6 6AN. (021 523 0215)

S. Francis House, 15 Botolph Lane, **Cambridge** CB2 3RD. (0223 353903)

S. Francis Convent, **Compton Durville**, South Petherton, Somerset TA13 5ES. (0460 40473)

The Little Portion, 111/2 Lothian Road, **Edinburgh**, EH3 9AN. (031 228 3077)

16 Dalsef Street, Barrowfield, **Glasgow** G31 4AS.

S. Mary at the Cross, **Glasshampton**, Shrawley, Worcester WR6 6TQ. (0299-896-345)

The Friary, **Hilfield**, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 7BE. (0300 341345)

S. Francis House, 68 Laurel Road, **Liverpool** L7 0LW. (051 263 8581)

43 Endymion Road, Brixton, **London** SW2 2BU.
(081 671 9401).

Holy Trinity House, Orsett Terrace, **London** W2 6AH.
(071 723-9735)

The House of the Divine Compassion, 42 Balaam Street, Plaistow, **London** E13 8AQ. (071 476-5189)

10 Halcrow Street, Stepney, **London** E1 2EP.
(071 247-6233)

Greystones S. Francis, First Avenue, Porthill, **Newcastle-under-Lyme**, Staffs ST5 8QX.
(0782 636839)

S. Francis House, Normanby Road, **Scunthorpe**, South Humberside DN15 6AR. (0724 853899)

Society of S. Francis, S. Augustine's Mission, P.O. Penhalonga, **Mutare**, Zimbabwe.

THE SECOND ORDER

Saint Mary's Convent, Freeland, **Witney**, Oxfordshire OX8 8AJ. (0993 881225)
The Old Parsonage, Freeland, **Witney**, Oxfordshire OX8 8AQ. (0993 881227)

THE THIRD ORDER

Minister General: The Revd. Brian Hamilton, P.O. Box 327, Tauranga, New Zealand.
Minister Provincial (European Province):
The Revd. Canon Stephen Platten,
Lambeth Palace, London SE1 7JU.
(071 928-8282)

AMERICA

Little Portion Friary, P.O. Box 399, Mt. Sinai, NY 11766/0399, U.S.A. (516 473-0553)
54 Old Post Road, Box 389, Mt. Sinai, NY 11766.
(516 473-9434)
S. Elizabeth's Friary, 1474 Bushwick Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11207, U.S.A. (718 455-5963)
San Damiano, 573 Dolores Street, San Francisco, CA 94110, U.S.A. (415 861-1372)
S. Francis House, 3743 Army Street, San Francisco, CA 94110, U.S.A. (415 824-0288)

THE SECOND ORDER

Poor Clares' Convent, Maryhill, Mt. Sinai, NY 11766, U.S.A.

AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND

S. Francis Friary, 1a Brighton Road, Parnell, Auckland, New Zealand. (09 771 292)
33 Carlton Gore Road, Grafton, Auckland 1, New Zealand. (09 775 054)
Hermitage of S. Bernadine of Siena, Stroud, N.S.W. 2425, Australia. (049 945 372)

THE SECOND ORDER

Monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Stroud, N.S. W. 2425, Australia. (049 945503)

PACIFIC ISLANDS

S. Mary of the Angels Friary, Haruro, P.O. Box 78, Popondetta, Northern Province, Papua New Guinea.
Douglas House, P.O. Box 3411, Lae, Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea.
Anglican Church, Nambaiyufa, Movi, via Goroka, Eastern Highlands Province, Papua New Guinea.
Patterson House, P.O. Box 519, Honiara, Solomon Islands. (Honiara 22386)
The Friary, P.O. Box 7, Auki, Malaita Province, Solomon Islands.
La Verna Friary, Hautambu, P.O. Box 519, Honiara, Solomon Islands.
San Damiano Friary, Diocese of Hanuato'o, Kira Kira, Makira Ulawa Province, Solomon Islands.

Reviews

John V. Taylor, The Christlike God, SCM, £9.95.

All his life John Taylor has combined a longing to communicate the message of God to others and considerable expertise as a preacher and teacher, with the insights of a theologian and the deceptive simplicity of a person who wants to live prayerfully close to the Man and not just the message. It shows in all he writes.

In *The Go-Between God* he was sharing with us the insight God had given him through the evidence of God the Holy Spirit. Here, using a striking phrase of Michael Ramsey's, he is concerned to demonstrate the astonishing revelation of Christ in God. 'God is Christlike, and in him is no un-Christlikeness at all', echoing S. Paul 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself'.

What he also seems to be asserting is that 'Christ was in God - reconciling the world to himself'. But before that can be said he engages in the age old questions about how we can ever think or speak of God at all. Where do we get our ideas of God? The recognition of God in the numinous, the ordinary and extraordinary, 'what we have heard and seen', to quote S. John, the God who intervenes, who rescues, the God who is the infinite, the 'other', he says, laying out one chief purpose for writing this book, 'The staggering claim of the Christian Faith, which this book sets out to examine, is that that unknown, that impenetrable silence, that everlasting source of existence, is Love; but the meaning of that statement is lost when we diminish in our thinking that which we call love.' (p.49)

When it comes to acknowledging what reconciles the statement 'God was in Christ' with 'Christ was in God', he turns to a slightly unexpected, though to this writer, most welcome source, Charles Williams. If this book serves to encourage others to look again at that brilliant and unusual writer who died during the war, and was an inspiration to a whole group of writers, including C.S.Lewis, T.S.Eliot and Tolkien, it will have done a service.

John Taylor acknowledges his debt to Williams' concept of 'exchange' and the way of co-inherence, that Jesus shared our life so that we might share his - and not only his life in joy, but life in suffering. 'Bear ye one another's burdens.' This is the law of Christ.

Williams' *He Came Down from Heaven* though not explicitly mentioned here is clearly the source to which John Taylor has turned. The ideas are not original but the language in which they are expressed is, and can be a revelation to those who share them.

The exchange of Love, leading to a pattern of co-inherence is perfected in God's love for us in Jesus, and our love for

him in prayer, having as its end 'that we may dwell in him and he in us.'

So of prayer he says 'the true meaning of prayer...is the communion, the mutual delight and exchange of love which is the purpose of God's creation of that which is not God to be his other'.

The notes at the end of this book reveal the wide source from which he has collected the flowers of other men - but he wears his scholarship lightly. It is a book to be read and re-read and its anecdotal style, which makes the reading easier, in no way disguises the very real depth of spiritual insight, his awareness of God's personal dealing with him, and his longing to share that with others.

MICHAEL SSF

Edward Carpenter, Archbishop Fisher, Canterbury Press, £35.00.

If you are interested in the history of the Church of England during the lifetime of Geoffrey Fisher (1887-1972), you will find that this is the book to read. It is a monumental book of 820 pages. It does reveal the character of a truly great leader, but it is also packed with a wealth of background information.

Lord Fisher was involved in many controversies and issues. For example, we read of his contribution to the debate on nuclear armaments, his views on marriage and divorce, and his ecumenical outlook which culminated in his visit to Pope John XXIII. If you think that he was overshadowed by other Archbishops of this century, you will find new insights by reading this important book.

MARTIN SSF

Mary Loudon, Unveiled: Nuns talking, Chatto and Windus, £9.99.

This is a fascinating book. Six Anglican and six Roman Catholic nuns talk about their lives with frankness and courage. Sadly, the material is trivially packaged. The cover has a coy young sister, in pre-Vatican II headgear, pondering dreamily beneath a tabloid title. It is an outmoded stereotype, which is not only unreal, but bears no relation to the integrity of the women in the text. The author (pictured in an equally stereotyped glamour-pose on the back flap) is an agnostic, whose introduction reveals an unfamiliarity with religious life - she even confuses 'clothing' with first vows.

But do not let the misleading superficiality of the exterior put you off. Beyond lies a profound and moving read. The author's very ignorance of religious life means she has to allow the sisters to speak for themselves. Their diversity - character, occupation, outlook - makes each chapter distinct. They are of various nationalities. Three are German, with lives irrevocably touched by the Nazi period. What strikes me most deeply is that the form of life in no

way dictates the content. Community has enhanced not crushed their individuality. The challenge of religious life has been a journey of self-discovery for them all. One RC nun makes an ignorant prejudiced remark about Bishop Barbara Harris, but for most the vows have opened them to other people; and in sharing their lives with us, they also share wisdom and insight.

The nuns in this book are not fantasy objects dropping veils, but real women confronting real problems in real lives.

PETA DUNSTAN

Hans Urs von Balthasar, The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics, Vol. IV, The Realm of Metaphysics in Antiquity, T and T Clark, £31.95.

Some years ago I reviewed the first three volumes of this work. I am glad to see this fourth volume. It would be a pity to be put off by the metaphysics in the subtitle. A glance at the list of contents shows Homer, Hesiod, to Pindar, Aeschylus, Sophocles and Virgil as well as some of the people you might associate with metaphysics, and there is a section on S. Francis and the Franciscan life as 'pure glorifying praise for the glory of the grace and love of God which streams forth from every being'. 'The one who praises makes himself poor so as to be able to experience all being as the flowing love of God'.

GILLIAN CLARE CSCJ

Margaret Guenther, Holy Listening: the art of spiritual direction, DLT, £8.95.

Among the wealth of literature on this and related topics, this book is likely to make its mark. Margaret Guenther makes her approach from an overtly feminine and also practical point of view, using as yardsticks the everyday spheres of hospitality, teaching and midwifery.

Whilst being clear about some professional attitudes, she maintains that spiritual direction is the art of the amateur, in the proper sense of that word: 'one who loves, loves the art she serves, loves and prays for the people who trust her, loves the Holy Spirit who is the true director.' She is clear that this is not psychotherapy or pastoral counselling and is not to be confused with the mutuality of deep friendships, 'because in this covenanted relationship, the director has agreed to put herself aside so that total attention is on the person sitting in the other chair.'

She requires certain prerequisites which she sums up as well-balanced, neither overly pious nor feeding the ego through others' dependence. To share pain, carry burdens, speak on equal terms and celebrate with the other, are part of the process, 'into which God springs surprises, and the space becomes gracious and holy.'

The director is to teach self-knowledge, educate for maturity, with the gospel as the major source: she is to bring to birth,

assuming that God is at work and that new life is germinating. Waiting is inevitable, ordained, fruitful, so silence is precious, and self-care a holy obligation. Guenther's chapter on women in spiritual direction is sensitive but unemotional and she uses a few pages for particular reference to victims of abuse.

This book is easy to read, full of examples (camouflaged for confidentiality) and clearly the work of one who knows what she is about, although in her epilogue she says 'God uses strange, unlikely, even dubious material, and wastes nothing, even our mistakes.'

ELIZABETH CSF

Geoffrey Rowell (ed), The English Religious Tradition and the Genius of Anglicanism, Ikon, £9.95.

These lectures were delivered in the spring of 1992 at the celebration in Keble College Chapel of the bicentenary of the birth of John Keble. They are twelve in number, descriptive of the contribution to the tradition of twelve men and a woman.

This book makes it possible for a much wider audience to benefit from the labours of the contributors, and will be welcomed by readers who are concerned at this time for their church and are perhaps in need of a reminder of the glories of her past which emerged in times of trial, and which belong not just to the past but by way of tradition to us too, in our time.

Bede, Anselm, Lady Julian, Wyclif are seen to be tributaries to the stream before the Reformation; and Cranmer, Hooker, Herbert, Andrewes, the Wesleys, Keble and Temple are representative of those who ensured its continuance to our own day. Here we do not have thirteen potted biographies, but rather scholarly studies of the very different ways in which these historical figures influenced the English religious heritage.

To Bishop Stephen Sykes fell the task of identifying 'The Genius of Anglicanism', and if the reader is left with no very clear impression of that genius, it is probably because the writer was true to his subject. The two concluding sermons are inevitably nostalgic in tone, and for this reader did

little to emphasise the urgent relevance of the spirit and labours of John Keble to the life of the Church of England in 1993. But do read, enjoy, be edified by this book!

ANSELM SSF

Sr Agnes SOLI, The Song of the Lark, Triangle, £5.99.

I approached this book with interest as a sequel to Sr Agnes' book **A Tide that Sings**, and a development of her very direct and personal account of beginning a new experience of religious life as a solitary on the remote Shetland island of Fetlar.

Each chapter in this book is a combination of recounting the events of the founding of a community on the island, and then a few paragraphs written in the immediate moment of Sr Agnes' reflections on events.

The heart of what she recounts and reflects on is the anticipation of the visit of a possible aspirant to join her, her arrival, and eventual decision to join Sr Agnes. This inevitably brings with it heartsearching, change and growth.

I could not help but feel from the occasional comment, and an underlying unexpressed feeling somehow seeping through the text, a regret within Sr Agnes in the midst of celebration. Something of the original vision and simplicity at 'The Ness' begins to be lost in a new vision of growth and expansion.

Nevertheless, her style of writing evokes vivid pictures of events, personalities, and the experience of living close to the elements and changing seasons, all of which make it memorable reading.

ANGELA GUILLE

Review Round-up

Sharp questions arise when we consider our relationship with the world. **Frank Turner**, a Jesuit priest, asks **How can we create a just society?** (DLT, £3.95). He relates Biblical passages about justice to contemporary human experience, and provides questions for discussion and

prayer. Part of the Scripture for Living series, it can be used by individuals or groups.

Another priest, this time Anglican, considers the pastoral role of the clergy in parish life, in **Eccentric Ministry: pastoral care and leadership in the parish** by **Christopher Moody** (DLT, £7.95). His model involves a movement away from some of the current professional models towards a new vision of pastors as watchers and explorers, bridge-builders who have a special place to play in keeping the church in the way of pilgrimage.

A parish with a particular vision is S. Mary's, Bourne Street. In the latest of their Tracts for our Times, **Seek ye first: the gospel and moral choices**, edited by **John Greenhalgh and Elizabeth Russell** (£5.95), authors including an MP, a contemplative nun, a psychotherapist, and several academics and clergy, write on contemporary morality and ethics, first from a theological viewpoint, then considering broad issues, and finally more particular ones. Further reading is also suggested.

The immorality and injustice of poverty and need in the world may leave us feeling paralysed. **50 ways you can feed a hungry world** (Kingsway, £5.99) supplies just what it says - practical ways to help, from small and nearly painless changes in lifestyle which an individual or family could make, to large projects for an entire church or community to undertake. For those prepared for a major change it even evaluates a range of careers in terms of their helpfulness to those in need.

Work is the theme of **David Adam's** new book **Prayer lines: Celtic prayers about work** (Triangle, £4.99) which follows his previous volumes of prayers in the Celtic tradition. He writes of it as 'an attempt to re-tune ourselves so that we may vibrate to the Presence...' Work in its broadest sense is included - our engagement with the world from morning to evening, in achievement and disappointment. Beautiful line drawings complement the prayers.

Poetry runs through Celtic prayer: in **Love burning deep** (SPCK, £7.99), **Kathy Galloway**, a former co-warden of Iona Abbey transforms her own life and meditations into powerful and moving poems and lyrics (tunes are suggested), which link the personal and the political with imagination and passion.

HELEN JULIAN CSF

Dates for your diaries

Vocation events

Consider Your Call

23-25 July Hilfield

3-5 September Alnmouth

Weekends, not geared to any particular ministry, for anyone over 18 seeking to explore God's call.

Exploring Religious Life

25 September Westminster, London

A day event run by Anglican religious for those between 18 and 40 who wish to understand more about the Religious Life.

Full details from: Br John Francis SSF, Vocations Adviser, S. Francis House, 113 Gillott Rd, Birmingham, B16 0ET (s.a.e. please). Phone 021-454 8302.

Compton Durville Prayer and Painting Retreat 15-19 November

Hilfield
Summer Festival
10 July, 2.00 - 5.30pm

Stigmata Festival
18 September, 12 noon
(please bring your own lunch)

Alnmouth
Sounds of Silence
Unconducted silent weekend
June 25-27

Celebrating Francis
18 September

At S. Nicholas' Cathedral, Newcastle
11.00am - 4.00pm (please bring your own lunch)

Published by the First Order European Provinces of the Society of S. Francis, a religious order in the Anglican Communion. The Society of S. Francis is committed to follow Christ in the way of S. Francis of Assisi, in humility, love and joy.

All correspondence should be addressed to the Editor at The Friary, Hilfield, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 7BE.

Peace and justice

by Sister Helen Julian

My mother sometimes reminds me of how I would burst in from school saying, 'Do you know - it's not fair!' usually followed by a tale of how some schoolfriend was allowed to do or have something which I wasn't. My sense of injustice certainly didn't lead to peace in our home, at those moments.

On a wider scale, many young men, especially black young men, perceive the police as treating them unfairly, and therefore see the police as enemies. Again, lack of justice leads to conflict and lack of peace.

Of course, real peace is much more than a lack of conflict - that is only the first necessity. The Biblical 'shalom' is much richer, with its sense of wholeness, of peace and harmony which cannot be realised in an unjust world. The prophet Isaiah made this connection when, in talking about the coming of God's reign, he says:

Then justice will dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness abide in the fruitful field.

The effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever. (Is 32:16-17)

The churches, too, increasingly make this connection between peace and justice. The Second Vatican Council, for example, in the pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, said:

'Peace is not merely the absence of war; nor can it be reduced solely to the maintenance of a balance of power between enemies; nor is it brought about by dictatorship. Instead, it is rightly and appropriately called an enterprise of justice. Peace results from that order structured into human society by its divine founder, and actualised by men as they thirst after ever greater justice. The common good of humanity finds its ultimate meaning in the eternal law. But since the concrete demands of this common good are constantly changing as time goes on, peace is never attained once for all, but must be built up ceaselessly.' (para.78)

This process of building up peace through the 'enterprise of justice' is perhaps better visualised as a circle than a straight line. Peace enables the development of social structures of truth and justice, which in turn lead to greater peace, which enables further growth in justice. Because of this interweaving, the working out of the connection in particular cases is complex.

I have chosen here to focus on the arms trade, but there are many other examples



Allen Tannebaum / Sigma

American tank in Kuwait

which could be used to demonstrate the links between justice and peace. To mention only two: much of the trading system of the world is unjust, favouring the rich and powerful and putting at a disadvantage the poor and powerless.

This leads to suspicion and jealousy among nations and between different groups within nations. As we have seen only too clearly recently, racial and religious discrimination lead to ethnic conflict, to the setting up of barriers, and ultimately to war and death for many.

The arms trade rests heavily on the sale of weapons by the industrialised world to developing countries. This trade was worth \$18,256bn in 1989. Military spending in developing countries increased more than twice as fast as that in industrialised countries between 1960 and the mid 1980s, and the UK is selling more of the arms it makes to developing countries - 69% in 1985, 80% in 1990.

What are the effects of this trade? The most obvious is that these weapons are used to kill people. Between 1945 and 1986 there were more than 120 wars, 99% of them in the developing world, and therefore fought largely with imported weapons. Over 30 million people, mostly civilians, have died in these wars.

The arms trade prolongs wars; the Iran/Iraq war was expected to be brief, as both sides would run out of weapons. But in fact arms were sold to both sides by 26 countries, including the UK, after the war started. The war lasted 8 years and cost 1 million lives. Exporting countries rarely discriminate as to who can buy, and many weapons go to bolster repressive, dictatorial regimes, to keeping in power governments who oppress, torture and kill their own people.

These are the obvious ways in which the arms trade kills, but there are many other more subtle effects, which kill just as surely. As far back as 1950 the UN linked development and disarmament. A Vatican

document puts it starkly: 'Even when armaments are not used, by their cost alone they kill the poor by causing them to starve.'

A comparison of India and Costa Rica demonstrates this. In 1987 India spent 0.9% of its Gross National Product (GNP) on health and 3.9% on the military. Infant mortality was high - 99 per 1,000, life expectancy low, at 58, and there was one doctor for 2,621 people. In Costa Rica 5% of GNP went on health, and 0.6% on the military. Infant mortality was only 18 per 1,000, life expectancy 75 years, and there was one doctor for 1,034 people.

Development is affected in other ways too. The building up of an infrastructure eg. roads and railways, and the process of industrialisation, may be biased towards military needs rather than the real needs of the mass of the people.

Debt is also linked to the arms trade. In 1989 the president of the World Bank estimated that one third of the debt of some major developing countries was due to arms imports. Until very recently military spending was never a target of the austerity programmes imposed on indebted countries by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Instead, public spending and food subsidies were cut. Fortunately this is beginning to change, perhaps in response to a growing appreciation of the interdependence of issues of peace and those of justice.

For me as a child, injustice did not destroy peace, because I knew I was loved. And perhaps that is the particular ingredient which we as Christians can bring to this complex interweaving of peace and justice, justice and peace. Breaking down the barriers which divide us can certainly be helped by justice, but justice is not enough on its own to uproot suspicion and heal pain. Love is needed, the love which turns the other cheek and goes the second mile, the love which does more than justice requires.